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Kind: captions Our friends, yeah, they do go to school. Sometimes, they'll be like so how many hours of school do you do and I'll be like 2 and they'll be like we do 6, that's so unfair. For me, home school is just learning about the world and also learning to be yourself. It's not nebula, it's a galaxy god damnit. As a person, I didn't enjoy school. I enjoyed it for a bit but after a while, it just felt repetitive and boring and I don't like activities that are repetitive and boring and also the toilets were horrible. You've already done your mental maths so tick. Home education is one of Australia's largest growing trends. It seems like more and more families are choosing to home educate rather than sending their children to school. In the past, home education families were associated with, you know, hippies who wanted to live off-grid, no electricity, that kind of stuff, or your fundamentalist Christian families. But increasingly, ordinary people are choosing to home educate. Now, breakfast. Toast. You want some breakfast? - Yeah - Okay My name's Myfanwy Dibben and my partner in life is Daniel Jeffares and together we home educate our children. We're both casual teachers and so we can accept work to facilitate home education. Mainstream schooling has a limit on what it can teach and when it can teach it whereas at home everything is individualised and timely. This one looks more decomposed than that one. For many parents, they have this very strong belief about family and they think that institutionalised models of education maybe get in the way of them and their relationships with their children or maybe they don't agree with the way curriculums are structured and they want to do something a little different. We need to clean this bench up so you can have your ancient scroll out. The education I'm having is a classical education. My mum is a very passionate teacher. - So this was when? - When Solomon dies and Israel is split up Oh yeah, that was a bit of a disaster. I decided I wanted to do the NAPLAN because I feel a little bit competitive. I was in band six which is really high An interesting study that came out of the New South Wales parliamentary inquiry into home education in around 2014 showed that children who were home educated did significantly better in all NAPLAN areas and across all the year levels compared to mainstream school children. But I've also been writing an article for Historicool and it got published. A child at home can whiz through a curriculum, simply because it's one on one teaching. Whoa we don't need the big ones yet. We always try to aim to finish any formal schooling before lunchtime so that she has as much time to do whatever she's interested in. One time in the garden when I was digging, I found some bones and that's why I really wanted to be an archaeologist. Research coming out of a group in America that looks at home education outcomes suggests that Ivy League colleges over there prefer children who've been home educated because apparently they're really good at learning on their own, they're able to manage their own learning, they're able to manage a course of study and they're apparently less likely to drop out of colleges. The thing about space is it's so awesome but it's so terrifying at the same time. It's infinitely big and it's so beautiful but at the same time, it's a dark void as well and it would be very scary. So Louis is on the autism spectrum, he's also a highly gifted child. So complex needs, socially, emotionally and academically. I'm Carly and this is Matt, my husband, and we are a home educating family. Another group is this unintentional home education group, and their child may be bullied, they may have special needs, they may be on the autistic spectrum, and wind up home educating because they find the school just isn't able to meet the needs of that individual child. So we'll do this, we'll have something to eat and then we'll go and jump online and do some of our maths So we started off using school, some days he would go quite happily and the other days we would experience a complete shut down of

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personality. He'd hide away, couldn't talk to anybody, couldn't function. He was exceeding his class in many areas of his studies but was having great difficulties turning up. After three days, I was like 'No, I can't do this. I need to skip the day so I can calm down and then I can go back' What do you feel like doing today? Do you want to start the questions? The principal told us Louis was not welcome to attend the school 2 days a week which was the most at that stage we could get him to turn up. If he didn't go 5 days a week, he wasn't welcome to attend was the effect of what she said as far as I was concerned that wasn't good enough and we needed a solution. What we're making is a non-Newtonian fluid which is when you hit it with enough force, it becomes solid temporarily. Louis taught me about this, I'd never heard of it before. Louis is an autodidact. We sometimes catch him surreptitiously learning in his room. There is no way that you can force a child like Louis, down a particular path because if he is not engaged, he will tell you no. I could finally just get away from it. When you're home schooled you can go at your own pace because there's no one that's completely the same. Every brain is different. Yeah, we're just kind of free spirited with our home schooling, we'll go to the parks and mum will ask us some questions every so often and we'll see if we can get anything right. But, yeah, sometimes what we do, we just are carefree and just do it whenever. An interesting group within home education families are a group we call unschoolers. Now unschoolers believe in educating the child without a curriculum. They believe in following the child's interests and they trust their children that if they give them opportunities to do things that they're interested in and follow their dreams that they will learn what they need to learn in order to succeed in life. I'm Shae. Me and my husband Luke and our three girls, we're eclectic unschooly types. So our version of school probably looks like school holidays to some people. It's based on meeting the child where they're at, and what they're interested in with maybe a little bit of book work thrown in. There are no age set benchmarks, so my eldest daughter learned to read at about 9, Willow was probably 8, and Harper would've been 7. - Who wants to do the flour? - Me please! - So three cups? - Yeah, three cups. You learn from just your surroundings. When you're going to go cook, you learn how to do maths and measurements. - We've got three at the moment. - And how many are we going to put in each row? - Three - And how many's that altogether? - Nine - That's it. There were times I felt nervous about what my kids know compared to what kids are learning in school, but over years I've learned they do know quite a lot and when they're responsible for their own learning, what they do learn sticks and they often go into subjects with great interest and depth. When we were watching Horrible Histories, just the history kind of inspired us to make a timeline because we like history and it's pretty rad. I guess some people are like 'Really? Don't you want your kid to be smarter than you are?' It's not a huge deal to me if they've got a massive career or if they're a stay at home mum. If that's what's going to make them happy then, you know, I'm happy for them to do that. My dream job would be to have an aquarium called "En Pointe Aquarium" 'cause my passion is to dance but my favourite animal is sharks and it would be a pretty weird combination. I think one of the biggest misconceptions about home education is that your children will somehow be not socialised. We found actually the opposite to be true, the kids have got a lot of time to spend with their friends. I love seeing my friends, my friends are very close to me, I love seeing them a lot. Children will join together in home education groups so they'll have meetups with other like-minded families. They might do craft or horse-riding, the only difference is they can do it during school hours when other children are in school. Taking on the education of your child is a big responsibility but

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so is being a parent. The nicest thing about home education is that she has not been required to conform or mould her personality to suit the school she's in. - It feels like glue - Oh it does
So yes I have given up parts of my career. Yes, I could be doing a lot more but having been unintentional home educators I feel it's, actually, the best thing that could have happened for us.